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House Ag Committee Maintains Strong Sugar Policy in Farm Bill Discussion Draft

WASHINGTON—The House Committee on Agriculture released a discussion draft of the 2007 Farm Bill on Friday that would maintain the structure of the current sugar policy. The Committee is expected to consider this discussion draft next week.

The American Sugar Alliance released the following statement in response to these latest events:

“The current sugar program has been a huge success for taxpayers, grocery shoppers, farmers, and this country’s food security. Weakening this policy, as some large food manufacturers have suggested, would jeopardize America’s ability to produce an ingredient used in nearly everything we eat.

“We are pleased that the Chairman is supporting the continuation of the successful sugar policy and has proposed ways to make it even stronger, including an ethanol provision and a long overdue loan rate increase.

“Chairman Peterson is to be commended for his strong leadership in drafting a 2007 Farm Bill that will help America’s farmers meet tomorrow’s challenges. We look forward to working closely with the Chairman and the Committee in the coming weeks to strengthen the sugar program.”

Sugar policy has operated at no cost to taxpayers since the last Farm Bill. The policy has also helped generate wholesale sugar prices that are cheaper today than they were in 1980.

U.S. sugar producers contend that without a strong sugar program they would be hard-pressed to continue sugar production, leaving America dependent on foreign producers that have proven to be unreliable in the past.

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For more information about U.S. sugar policy, visit www.sugaralliance.org